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# A TRANSVAAL VIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION.

BY DR. F. V. ENGELENBURG, EDITOR OF THE "*PRETORIA VOLKSSTEM*."

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SOUTH AFRICA is poor, extremely poor, in spite of its gold output of nearly two millions per month and its diamond export of five millions per year.

The disabilities from which South Africa suffers are manifold. The climate is glorious, the soil fertile, but the rainfall is uncertain and irregular. There are large tracts where rain falls only once every four or five years; and, where circumstances are more favorable, there are no natural reservoirs in which water can be stored, or certainly none to any appreciable extent. The rivers, dry in summer-time, become foaming torrents in the rainy season, and pour the whole of their waters into the sea. If the Witwatersrand were not situated alongside an extensive formation of dolomite, which absorbs rainwater, and stores it up like a sponge, it would have been utterly impossible for its unrivalled gold industry to attain its present condition, and the Boers to-day would be enjoying the rest and peace which they have ever longed for and deserve.

In addition to the dearth of water, South Africa has had to contend with many other drawbacks, resulting from its clumsy topographical configuration. On its northern confines, it is defenceless against the ravages of nature, which sweep like a whirlwind through the whole of the southern continent. From olden days, Africa has been known as the land of plagues and calamities. Rinderpest sweeps down from the north, and its latest attack, in 1896, brought ruin to both white and black; from the north, too, come the locusts and other noxious insects; from the

north, come the hot tropical winds, bringing drought and warding off the beneficent rain; and from the north have many clouds arisen casting sinister shadows on this part of the continent. The clumsy configuration of South Africa, to which I have alluded, is the natural result of its plateau-form, with its abrupt descent to the Indian Ocean. The region is devoid of navigable rivers; the seacoast is an endless, monotonous line without fiords, without estuaries, without inlets of any kind, and therefore without harbors. The west coast is, moreover, separated from the interior by wastes of sand dunes; the east coast is unhealthy and haunted by the tsetse fly. No wonder that Phœnicians, Arabs and Portuguese, after their first experience of the country, had little inclination to colonize it, and to make it their home. The only white men who manage to adapt themselves to the exigencies of the southern continent and build up a stalwart nation are the Afrikanders. They are destined to occupy the land for ever, and to thrive here when diamonds and gold shall be things of the past.

And the blacks? I have already said that South Africa is poor, and has never possessed any large population, for the reason that it could not support it. The Bushmen live like beasts of prey in the wilderness; the Hottentots were subject to continuous decimation through sickness and famine. When the warlike Zulus, several centuries ago, came down along the east coast, they drove before them the few handfuls of human beings they encountered, like leaves before the wind, became masters of the best sub-tropical portion of the eastern provinces, murdering and slaying like swarthy Huns, and pressed down to Natal. But although their social organization was higher than that of the nomadic tribes which they superseded, the poverty of South Africa constrained them to continue war amongst themselves. As soon as one Zulu tribe commenced to thrive and increased in wealth of cattle, it became necessary to obtain more land—in other words, to wage war against its neighbors; for South Africa was not able to give shelter to any dense population. That is why the Zulus could only manage to exist either by internecine strife or by occasional emigration, to the natural detriment of the weaker races. Both the legendary and documentary history of South Africa's blacks tends to prove that, when sickness had not to be reckoned with, war inevitably became the means of re-

ducing the population of this region to its normal sustaining capacity. In recent years, the supremacy of the whites has materially affected internecine war as a limiting factor with regard to native population; but its place has been filled in some measure by disease and drink. There is no doubt, however, that the black population is greatly on the increase, now that they are not permitted to indulge in war amongst themselves. But, at the same time, the importation of foreign "mealies" (maize)—the staple food of the Kaffirs—has also steadily increased; in 1897, the South African Republic imported nearly 36 million pounds of mealies; in 1898, the total importation had risen to over 44½ millions. There will come a day when the natives will cease to get work at the mines, when the mines will be exhausted. Then the importation of South American cereals will fall off, and South Africa will be expected to provide food for its own native population. Will it be equal to the task? The history of the past supplies an eloquent answer.

But with the industrious European colonist, schooled and disciplined by labor, can South Africa not produce what is necessary for his support? The white population of this part of the world amounts, in round numbers, to two millions—a very generous estimate—inhabiting a vast extent of country, larger than France, Germany and Italy together. This population is dependent on the outside world, not merely for the products of technical industry, but also for those of agriculture. We import potatoes and frozen meat from Australia, wood from Canada and Norway, eggs and butter from Europe, meal and mules from America. The sugar and tea grown in Natal cannot compete with the products of Mauritius and Ceylon, without the aid of protection. In order that these two millions of whites may be commercially accessible to the outside world, and that this huge import trade may be practicable, more than fifty million pounds sterling have been devoted to railway construction. Every week sees numerous steamers arriving from all parts of the world, laden with every conceivable kind of goods, to supply the limited South African community with many necessities of life. Should this means of supply ever be cut off, a large portion of our white and other population would simply starve, or at any rate be deprived of the comforts of life. Only the Boers, who eke out a frugal existence on their secluded farms, and have not yet become depend-

ent on frozen meat, European butter, American meal and Australian potatoes—only the Boers, who, with rare endurance, the heritage of their hardy race, boldly face years of drought, rinderpest, locusts and fever, could survive such a collapse of the economic machinery of a country so severely dealt with by nature. The remaining Europeans would gradually disappear, just as the Phœnicians and the Arabs disappeared in the days long past. As long as the gold mines and the diamond mines can be worked and made to pay, so long will the abnormal economy of South Africa preserve its balance; but as soon as South Africa has swallowed up its capital to the very last bit of gold, the Uitlander will have to seek for fresh fields for the exercise of his nervous energy, and the Afrikaner will be abandoned to his struggle with the inimical elements, as has ever been his lot in the past. By the sweat of his brow he will have to lead his carefully stored-up water to the fields continuously threatened by locusts, he will have to shield his flocks from plague and theft, he will have to preserve continual watch against the inroads of the ever-increasing blacks. The Boer—that is the agriculturist—is destined to be the Alpha and Omega of South Africa's white culture; he alone, in this quarter of the globe, can save civilization from the ultimate gulf of bankruptcy. To say that South Africa is a rich land, or to paint its future in glowing colors and to dilate on the brilliant prospects that it offers to an unlimited white population, is only possible to an extraordinarily superficial observer, to an unscrupulous company-promoter, or to an over-zealous emigration agent, whose salary is in proportion to the number of his victims.

The first European power which acquired a firm footing in the East Indies, the Portuguese, simply ignored South Africa. The Portuguese were succeeded by the Hollanders, who, not until after much hesitation and two futile attempts to conquer Mozambique, decided to take possession of Africa's southern extremity. And the English, in common with the Hollanders, never desired aught but the few harbors which South Africa possesses; the interior had no value in the eyes of the European maritime powers, which only looked to the opulent East. A clear illustration of this is furnished by the fact that, although possessing Walvisch Bay, England quietly acquiesced in Germany's protectorate over the hinterland; and another instance is to be found in the anxiety which England has recently shown to get hold of Delagoa Bay

and Beira. The possession of these harbors would give to the British Empire control of the sea-way to the East, and to the English merchants such trade with the interior of South Africa as circumstances might permit. Neither the Dutch East India Company nor the British rulers bestirred themselves in any way, in connection with the steady expansion of the white colonists in the hinterland. And this interior colonization had barely acquired any importance before there arose both petty and material disturbances with the authority representing the purely European factor. This was not at all difficult to understand. The community at the Cape was composed of administrators and merchants who amassed considerable fortunes by means of the uninterrupted trade between Europe and India; the luxury which reigned at the foot of Table Mountain was proverbial; all the comforts of European civilization could be enjoyed in sunny South Africa, untroubled by the shadows of the Old World. In vivid contrast to this luxurious life of ease, the burdens of the inland colonists were, indeed, grievous to be borne; rough, hardy pioneers of the wilderness, their life was one prolonged struggle with poverty, with ravaging beasts of prey, and with stealthy Bushmen and Hottentots. No wonder, therefore, that, little by little, a social gulf was created, that a marked dissimilarity of character was gradually developed between the up-to-date Cape patricians, treading the primrose paths of luxury, and the nomadic shepherds of the veldt, independent of aught save their fowling-pieces, and undisputed lords of the limitless plateau behind the mountains fringing the coast. No wonder, therefore, that the mere handful of conquerors of the Great Karroo had little love for the arbitrary rule of a Proconsul in Cape Town Castle, on behalf of an authority having its headquarters in Europe.

Under the Dutch East India Company friction often arose between the two white elements of the Colony, and when the Cape fell into the hands of the British, in the beginning of the present century, the old antagonism continued to exist. I once heard it said that when Napoleon surrendered to the British in 1815, there was some talk of assigning to him, as a final resting-place, that pretty country estate of the early Dutch Governors, not far from Cape Town, but that this idea had to be given up, on account of distrust of the feelings of the inland colonists, there being some fear that South Africa might see a repetition of the

Elba incident. As long as the Imperial authorities left the inland colonists to themselves, and only exercised a general repressive control, the relationship between the two white communities of South Africa remained satisfactory, but as soon as the strings were pulled too suddenly from Europe, and the Cape authorities had to carry out a grasping, despotic policy, the two elements inevitably came to loggerheads. The best South African politicians—both British and Boer—are those who have frankly admitted that the political key to South Africa lies in an intelligent insight into the limit which should be allowed to Briton, Boer and Black. In other words, let each of the three fulfil the mission which nature has allotted to him, and then this much-vexed continent will enjoy the rest and peace of which it so urgently stands in need.

Is it necessary to give a résumé of the painful episodes which thronged upon one another in South Africa in the nineteenth century? The result of a hundred years of incompetency, weakness, vacillation, and reckless greed culminates to-day in the awful probability of an insensate strife between two hardy vital races, races unique by reason of their capacity for colonial expansion, races of similar origin and religion, races whose internal co-operation could have made this country, if not exceptionally prosperous, at least a particularly happy land, so that the dream of one of its most gifted children, Thomas Pringle, might have been fulfilled in gladsome measure:

"South Africa, thy future lies  
Bright 'fore my vision as thy skies."

The first beneficent breathing-space which was granted to South Africa by the fatal British policy, was when, in 1852 and 1854—after numberless mistakes had been committed by the Imperial authorities, mistakes which no historian now attempts to deny—the South African Republic and the Free State were respectively left to their own resources, by solemn covenants with the British Government—in other words, when the formal principle was adopted by England that the Briton should be "baas" of the coast and the Boer of the hinterland. The circumstances under which this took place had in the meantime become very grievous: the Boer States never had a fair start; the British maritime colonies levied enormous duties on goods consigned to the interior, and squeezed as much out of the Afrikander republics as

they possibly could. And thus whilst the British merchants at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban waxed fat and wealthy, the Boers became more and more impoverished. But they were sustained in their struggle against poverty by the hardy spirit which was their peculiar heritage from their forefathers. And although the Free State and the Transvaal languished in their material development, and Natal and the Cape batted upon them, the Boers were satisfied, like the lean dog in the fable who did not envy the lot of his richer brother, because the latter had to wear a heavy collar of gold.

The generous policy of 1852 and 1854 was only too short-lived. The lucid moments of the Anglo-African politicians have been, alas! few and far between. First came the ruthless annexation of Basutoland by the British authorities, just at the moment when the Free State had clipped the wings of the Basutos and rendered further resistance futile. Then came the unrighteous annexation of Griqualand West, which suddenly found favor in the eyes of the British on account of the discovery of diamonds, and on which arose the Kimberley of to-day. This was followed by the annexation of the Transvaal by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, with all the bitter feeling that naturally resulted therefrom. And then the Sir Charles Warren expedition, by which the Boers were deprived of Bechuanaland, because Mr. Rhodes—whose fortunate career at the Kimberley Diamond Fields enabled him to give the rein to his restless ambition—wanted to open up a pathway to the north, to the Rhodesia of to-day. Then came the establishment of the Chartered Company, followed by the notorious Jameson Raid. Such petty incidents as the Keate Award, the Swazieland Muddle, the Annexation of Sambaan's Land, I will pass over, for brevity's sake. In short, the beneficent policy of 1852 and 1854, which was for a moment revived under the Gladstone Ministry of 1881—when the independence of the South African Republic was restored—has been the exception during the century now speeding to its close. British statesmen apparently failed to see that South Africa could only be served by giving each race the domain which destiny had prepared for it, viz., the Boer the hinterland and the Britisher the coast, together with the rights and obligations connected therewith. The welfare of the interior states has ever been the life-buoy to which the whole of South Africa has clung, in times of darkness and



depression. Let the interior have a fair opportunity of thriving as well as the peculiar circumstances of the country permit, and the subjects of Queen Victoria will be able to enjoy the manifold pleasures of life without one drop of English soldiers' blood having to be spilt.

The immediate motive which prompted Sir Theophilus Shepstone's annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 was the commencement made by President Burgers of the long-cherished railway to Lourenço Marques. Natal and Cape Colony were not satisfied with squeezing the inland States by means of heavy duties, high postal tariffs, and enormous trade profits; they sought the complete economic dependency of the Republics, by prohibiting all railway traffic except through British ports. The selfishness of a commercial community knows no limit.

The second attempt to annex the South African Republic—with which the names of British politicians were connected—was not the result of a commercial policy, but it furnishes a striking illustration of the capitalism which has become such an important factor in South African policy, since the amalgamation of the diamond companies of Kimberley into one mighty body. The fact that to-day—whilst these lines are being written—this unhappy continent is on the eve of a *bellum omnium contra omnes*, can only be explained by the overwhelming influence acquired by certain "*nouveaux riches*"—whose social existence depends upon the Transvaal gold industry—among those who on the British side are shaping the fate of South Africa.

During the course of the present century, this part of the world has witnessed a variety of "agitations." It was the negrophilist agitation which drove the Boers in bitterness of spirit beyond the boundaries of Cape Colony; and it was an administrative agitation which for a long time impeded their progress and threw all manner of obstacles in their way; it was the politics of the counting-house which suggested the annexation of the Diamond Fields and the annexation of the Transvaal; and it is a stock exchange organization which is pulling the strings of the movement of to-day. Of all these agitations, the last—that of the financiers—is the most despicable, the most ominous, the most dangerous, and the most unworthy of the British nation. The Boers can forgive Dr. Philip for his negrophilistic ardor, they can forgive Sir Harry Smith, Sir Philip Wodehouse, Sir Bartle Frere, and

Sir Owen Lanyon for their excess of administrative zeal, but no Afrikaner will bow down at the bidding of a group of foreign speculators.

When the Witwatersrand gold fields were discovered, the Transvaalers had already had some experience of the advantages and disadvantages attendant on the possession of mineral wealth. In the early seventies, the opening up of the alluvial deposits at Pilgrim's Rest, in the northeast of the Republic, was the cause of considerable immigration. In the eighties, there was a rush to the diggings at Dekaap, of which Barberton became the centre, the Afrikaner element being strongly represented. From the very beginning, the law-makers of the Transvaal dealt very leniently with the miners, the vast majority of whom were foreigners. The Boers knew of the mineral wealth of their country at an early date, but they never felt constrained to exchange the quietude of their pastoral life for the feverish existence of the gold-seeker. The Boers have never endeavored to turn the presence of gold in their soil to practical account, and make it a direct source of national income; as, for instance, the Chartered Company has done, expropriating a large portion of the profits of the gold fields. An instance of this liberal legislation, more striking than a long array of figures, is furnished by the public lottery of gold claims—some of which are extremely valuable—which is now taking place, and in which both burghers and Uitlanders can participate without distinction.

The exceptionally generous legislation of the Boers with regard to mining matters was effected with the sole object of fostering agriculture; this has, however, only been realized in part, owing to the fact that the expansion of the mining industry gradually made native labor dear, and thus heavily handicapped the agriculturist. The administration of the Boers in the days of Pilgrim's Rest and Barberton compares very favorably with that of the Diamond Fields of Cape Colony. The Transvaalers were good-natured, but they had no inclination to be trifled with. In those days there was no talk of Uitlanders' grievances, nor even during the early years of Johannesburg. The Witwatersrand is not situated, like Pilgrim's Rest and Barberton, in an unfrequented part of the country, but it lies to the immediate south of Pretoria, between Potchefstroom and Heidelberg, in the very heart of the Boer States. Johannesburg sprang up with aston-

ishing rapidly, and offered special attractions to the large number of South African adventurers who, like Mr. Micawber, were only "waiting for something to turn up." From their farms in the Free State, from their wayside stores in Cape Colony, from their plantations in Natal, from their broker offices in the Diamond Fields, they gathered together—men of every type and every class, but united in their feverish thirst for wealth. The expectations of the most sanguine were realized; they reaped a rich harvest in the shape of large exchange profits, although many of their number knew practically nothing about mining or financial administration. Then came the inevitable collapse in 1889, which only spared the most fortunate; and the great majority of this strangely mixed community were gradually compelled to make room for more competent men from Europe and America. These brought brains and experience into their work, and placed the industry upon a more solid basis; but they also inoculated the Uitlanders with the *bacilli* of discord and revolution, much to the detriment of the shareholders across the sea.

The appearance of the present-day Uitlander—that is to say, the grievance-bearing or rather grievance-seeking stranger—dates from the period when qualified experts satisfied themselves as to the uniquely favorable situation of the precious metal in Witwatersrand—from the time when wild speculation began to make room for a genuine exploitation of the mines. The preliminary period to which I refer above was the cause of an influx of immigrants into the Republic. They spread themselves over the face of the country, penetrating into the most outlying spots, in order to procure material for the flotation of mining companies. This period also saw the birth of the "Land and Estate" Companies, who generally bought up the most uninhabited or uninhabitable farms for speculative purposes. By reason of foreign ownership of large tracts of land, the argument is often advanced that an enormous portion of the South African Republic no longer belongs to the Boers. It may be remarked, *en passant*, that, whilst the Boer has been severely condemned for his slothfulness in matters agricultural, practically none of the land companies has ever devoted more than a few acres to the growing of crops. When the period of wild speculation suffered a collapse, the Uitlander no longer spread himself over the whole of the Republic. Henceforward, the Witwatersrand was the exclusive scene of his

labors, and here he elected to pitch his tent. Outside the Rand, he confined himself to the ordinary occupations of the olden days—that of storekeeper for the folk of the few rustic centres, and bank manager, hotelkeeper, and clergyman in the solitary country towns.

After the crash of 1889, Johannesburg slowly became the Uitlander town *par excellence*. It deserves to be recorded that, as the output of gold began to show a continual increase, the "Uitlander question" acquired a proportionate magnitude. In every country where foreigners are to be found in appreciable numbers, there is an Uitlander question. It exists in France, in regard to the Italians and Belgians living there; in Japan, in regard to the Americans and Britishers; in London, in regard to the Poles; in the Middle Ages the Jews were in many cases a powerful "Uitlander" element. During the last century, the Germans in Russia have been "Uitlanders," and, according to the Czechs and Hungarians, they are so in Austria to-day. But the Uitlander question in the South African Republic differs from the Uitlander question elsewhere, as it has been made the cause of an international dispute between two States of unequal strength. In its present form, the Uitlander question is only the mask of a financiers' plot, of a piece of Exchange jobbery. It has steadily kept pace with the gold output. In 1889, £1,500,000 was produced. In that year, Johannesburg was horrified by a series of stealthy murders which were only explained as the handiwork of "Jack the Ripper." No one thought at that time, however, of saddling the Transvaal Government with responsibility for them, or of sending plaintive petitions to England as to the danger of life in the South African Republic! Everyone understood, then as now, that gold-fields offer peculiar attractions to questionable characters of all classes. In March, 1890, during a visit of President Krüger to the Golden City, the Transvaal flag was pulled down from the Government buildings. It subsequently transpired that this was only the work of some drunken rough, and the mining and mercantile communities lost no time in expressing their disapproval of the incident. The realization of the practical value of the deep-level theory—in other words, the ultimate conviction as to the indisputable durability and wealth of the Witwatersrand gold-fields—has, in the meantime, become the signal for an agitation against the Government and

the people of the South African Republic. From this period dates England's claim to suzerainty over the South African Republic and the paramount-powership in South Africa, of which hitherto no mention had ever been made. In 1894, the then High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch, was present at some diamond-drill experiments at the Rand, which proved beyond dispute the continuous nature of the gold-bearing reef at a considerable depth, and at an important distance from the outcrop reef. During this visit, Sir Henry Loch made a promise to the mining magnates—as per letter of Mr. Lionel Phillips, then the Chairman of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines\*—to stir up the Transvaal Government on condition that the “Uitlander” agitation increased in intensity. The Transvaal Green Book provides instructive reading even for to-day; it contains extracts from private letters from Mr. Phillips to his London friends. On the 10th of June, 1894, he wrote to Mr. Beit:

“As to the franchise, I do not think many people care a fig about it.”

On the 1st of July of the same year, he wrote to Mr. Wernher:

“Sir H. Loch (with whom I had two long private interviews alone) asked me some very pointed questions, such as what arms we had in Johannesburg, whether the population could hold the place for six days until help could arrive, etc., etc., and stated plainly that if there had been 3,000 rifles and ammunition here he would certainly have come over. He further informed me, in a significant way, that he had prolonged the Swaziland agreement for six months, and said he supposed in that time Johannesburg would be better prepared—as much as to say, if things are safer then we shall actively intervene.”

This conversation took place at Pretoria, where Sir Henry Loch, as the representative of Her Majesty's Government, was the honored guest of the Transvaal people! On the 15th of July of the same year, Mr. Phillips wrote to Mr. Beit:

“We don't want any row. Our trump card is a fund of £10,000 or £15,000 to improve the Volksraad. Unfortunately the Gold Companies have no Secret Service Fund.”

All this happened in 1894, when the gold output had already reached a total of nearly 7½ millions sterling. In 1895, it had risen to 8½ millions; the “trump card” had also risen and amounted to £120,000, with which sum the Reform movement at Johannesburg was partially financed—a movement which came to an untimely end at Doornkop.

\* *Vide* Transvaal Green Book, No. 2, of 1896.

In 1897 the inquiry by the official Industrial Commission took place, the result being a substantial lowering of railway tariffs and import dues. But the "grievances" still remained, and increased in 1897 in sympathy with the gold output, which had now reached the large figure of  $11\frac{1}{2}$  millions. Still more "unbearable" were these "grievances" in 1898, during which year  $16\frac{1}{4}$  millions of gold was dug out of Transvaal soil. This was the year of the Edgar affair and of the Uitlander Petition, and in the same year forty-five gold companies of the Rand (the share capital issued being £20,294,675) paid out in dividends no less than £5,089,785—an average of 25 per cent.! The output for 1899 has already been estimated at  $22\frac{1}{2}$  millions, and the number of dividend-paying companies increases every month.

In 1896, the rural population were visited by a series of grievous plagues—by rinderpest, by drought, by locusts, and by the dreaded fever. While the Uitlanders of the Rand were reported to be groaning under the oppression of their Egyptian taskmasters, and European shareholders were depicted as helpless victims of a corrupt Krüger régime, the Boers were "taking up arms against a sea of troubles" which threatened to overwhelm them, and of which we heard exceedingly little, either in the local papers or in the cable columns of the London press. Whilst thousands of Boer families saw the fruit of long years of toil plucked away by the hand of God in a single season, the campaign of libel on behalf of the Uitlanders was vigorously prosecuted with the help of money won from Transvaal soil by mining magnates, the princely munificence displayed by whom in London and other places outside South Africa was occasionally referred to in the local papers as a joyous chord between the "grievance" symphonies that were struck in the minor key.

I have little inclination to expatiate on the true character of the present movement against the Boers; but I do say that to support the latest type of agitation against the white population of the interior of South Africa is unworthy of the traditions of the Anglo-Saxon race. The South African Republic is not without political blemishes; as in every other country, we have our administrative scandals, both great and small; we have our social and economic plague-spots, which must be made to disappear. Gold-fields never were fountains of pure morality nor are they so in South Africa. Has one ever pictured the future of the

most civilized country of the Old World if a second Johannesburg were to spring up in mushroom fashion? I do not wish to speak evil of the wire-pullers of the present agitation against the Afrikaners; but, surely, those persons whose princely palaces have been built with Transvaal gold, and who cry out so loudly against our government, should be the last to throw stones against the Republic. The "oligarchy" at Pretoria—to use Mr. Chamberlain's recent expression—consists of barely a few dozen Boers; there is, therefore, strong evidence in favor of this "oligarchy" in the fact that it has been able to offer such prolonged resistance to the well-disposed and undoubtedly disinterested attempts of such gentlemen as Lionel Phillips to "improve" them from Johannesburg and London. Such an "oligarchy" is without a parallel in modern times. It forms a striking contrast to the worship of the golden calf on the Witwatersrand, from which Pretoria is only distant about three hours on horseback. Such an "oligarchy" deserves to be carefully preserved rather than destroyed, as we preserve from total extinction some rare plant or peculiar species of animal.

There are undoubted grievances in the South African Republic, but they are not the exclusive property of the Uitlanders; a discreet silence is observed with respect to the wrongs of the Transvaal burghers, and I do not feel it to be my task to dilate upon them now. But still they exist, although the absorbing selfishness of the mining magnates keeps back the light of day; the lust for gold stifles all generosity, compassion, mercy, brotherly love, and respect for the rights of the weak. What Monomotapa was to the Phœnicians and Arabs, Witwatersrand is to our present gold-seekers, and to most of the Uitlanders—a temporary land of exile, which they only endure for the sake of the gold. Can we picture the wise king Solomon demanding the franchise for his subjects in the realms of the Queen of Sheba?

South Africa is poor; it will remain poor, in spite of its gold and its diamonds. It will never be able to pay back the cost of a bitter strife, unless the gold-bedecked princes come forward with the treasure which they have wrung from the land. As long as the Boers allow the modern Phœnicians to dig the precious metals out of Transvaal soil without heavy impositions, and to have a free hand in the administration of the country and the government of the native population, it will be found that the best busi-

ness policy will be to leave the Boers in undisturbed possession of their country, free to rule it by their own healthy instinct and according to the good old traditions of their forefathers, with their own language, their own rulers, their own aspirations—even with their own faults and prejudices.

It should not be forgotten that, from the earliest days of the gold-fields, the Uitlanders knew that the South African Republic was an "oligarchy"; they knew that the Boers were "illiterate," "stupid," "ignorant," and a great deal besides; they knew that a dynamite monopoly existed, and that President Krüger was a "hard nut to crack." Notwithstanding this knowledge the "Uitlanders" have flocked in by thousands, and foreign capital has been invested amounting to several hundreds of millions sterling. During the first five months of the present year, Transvaal gold and other companies were registered here with a combined capital of over £15,391,389. In July last—in the middle of the crisis—five new companies were registered with a capital of £1,159,000. And of all the Uitlanders only a section of the British subjects are genuinely dissatisfied. Notwithstanding that the "oppression" of the Transvaal "oligarchy" has been told and retold, until the world has become sick and weary, immigrants are still pouring in from all quarters of the globe.

The Boers do not ask for mercy; they ask for justice. Those who keep up the unfair agitation against the South African Republic are the last men, however, to listen to the voice of righteousness, or to be guided by any noble impulse; political corruption is the seed they sow, and by their unexampled opportunities they feel confident of reaping their criminal harvest. Up to the present they have gathered only tears; a still more bitter time of reaping has yet to come. In the past, the Boers have been able to fight against immensely superior odds. They feel that the final victory will be theirs; for they know they have right on their side.

Well would it be for the British nation if they could but realize the significance of those words of Russell Lowell:

"Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne,  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

F. V. ENGELBURG.

Pretoria, August, 1899.